



WA State Dept. of Health
Immunization Program

Immunization Update

Spring 2003

VFC News

CDC has revised the Provider Site Visit Tool for 2003. Beginning July 1, 2003, it will be required for VFC/AFIX site visits. You can expect to receive the revised forms in May 2003. You may transition into using this revised tool immediately if you choose. **Using the new tool will be required as of July 1, 2003.**

Programs may add a page for additional county-specific data that they wish to collect. This information does not need to be reported to DOH. If you have any questions, please contact Katherine Harris-Wollburg @ (360) 236-3513 or e-mail to: katherine.harris-wollburg@doh.wa.gov.

Hepatitis News

Asian Pacific Islander (API) Task Force Initiates Strategic Planning Effort

The Asian Pacific Islander Task Force met in late February to initiate the development of the API Task Force 2003 - 2005 strategic plan. The energetic group included consumers (several of them teens), physicians, health care providers, representatives from community agencies, local public health, pharmaceutical companies, the Immunization Action Coalition of Washington, Healthy Mother's Healthy Babies of Washington staff and DOH Immunization Program staff. The diverse group included strong representation from the API Community. Dr. ShiePon Tzung, a physician from Northwest Gastroenterology Associates, provided the opening remarks. His three key messages about preventing hepatitis B became a common theme for the

planning meeting: Educate! Motivate! Vaccinate! The Task Force identified several key areas of focus for 2003 - 2005. They are: improving teen and adult immunization rates; focused provider and consumer education and awareness; focused efforts to reach, educate and follow-up with teens; and increased partnership development. The Task Force will continue to work together to establish activities and timelines for the hepatitis B prevention 2003 - 2005 strategic plan. The plan will be completed and available on the Immunization Program Web-site by mid-May. Please contact Jan Hicks-Thomson at 360-236-3578 if you would like more information, or would like to participate in the activities of the API Task Force.

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Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Efforts Show Some Improvement

Data on calendar year 2001 births from Immunization Program Perinatal Hepatitis B surveillance indicate some overall improvement in several areas of Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention statewide. 99% of infants born in 2001 to women who tested positive for HBsAg and reported to the system, received Hepatitis B Immune Globulin and dose 1 of hepatitis B vaccine within 24 hours of birth. 100% received both HBIG and the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine within 2 - 7 days of birth. This is similar to results from 2000 data, when 97% and 98% respectively were reported. A significantly greater percentage of infants reported in 2001 who completed the full series of vaccinations were post-tested, with 70% of the 2001 infants post-tested, while in 2000, only 34% were post-tested. There was a slight increase in the percentage of household and sexual contacts who began the three dose vaccination series

that completed it, with 77% of contacts in 2000 completing the series and 81% completing the series in 2001.

The high rate of early administration of HBIG and the hepatitis B birth dose are indicative of the acceptance of the importance of this intervention. The improvements in series completion, post testing, and the maintenance of all aspects of the Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program are a tribute to the dedicated Hepatitis Coordinators in local health throughout the State, who provide case management and persistent treatment to ensure that these infants and their families receive adequate follow-up to prevent the spread of hepatitis B. Your work is the cornerstone of this successful prevention effort! Thank you for all that you do to support it. For additional information, contact Carlos Quintanilla at 360-236-3506 or Claire Norby at 360-236-3565.

WIC/Immunization

"Record Round-Up Project" Gains National Attention

An unprecedented project between the Immunization Program and WIC has resulted in the collection of over 11,000 immunization records and the improvement of immunization coverage for infants aged 19-35 months.

WIC and Immunization Programs in twelve counties participated in this project to populate the CHILD Profile Immunization Registry and to improve the completeness of 4:3:1:3:3 immunization records for children 19-35 months. Between September 1, 2002 and December 31, 2002, clients brought their child's immunization records to their WIC visit and signed a consent form to have the information entered into the registry.

Information for 1,551 children was already complete in the registry and more than 9,500 children's records were improved through this activity. On average, 10 immunizations were added for each child. A big bonus for this project was that caregivers brought in the immunization records for all their children, not just those enrolled in WIC.



Participating counties included: Benton, Cowlitz, Franklin, Jefferson, Kitsap, Kittitas, Lewis, San Juan, Skagit, Spokane, Thurston and Whatcom. While all twelve counties achieved measurable increases, three counties achieved significant percentage point increases in county population of children 19-35 months of age with complete 4:3:1:3:3 history in the registry. Lewis County doubled its percentage from 7.5% to 15.8%; Spokane County tripled its percentage from 5.2% to 17%; and Cowlitz County realized a six-fold increase from 4.3% to 25.1%.

The project was presented at the National Immunization Conference in Chicago last month and has since been requested at several other national conferences. Pamela Johnson, Immunization Program Linkages Coordinator and Sheryl Pickering, WIC Local Program Consultant initiated this project and will be conducting a similar project again in 2003.

For more information contact: Pamela Johnson, DOH Immunization Program Linkages Coordinator at 360-236-3551 or by e-mail at Pamela.Johnson@doh.wa.gov.

USDA Immunization Screening Requirement to be Implemented in WIC Programs

In a separate activity, beginning March 1, 2003, WIC Programs began asking parents to bring their child's immunization record to their next certification visit. This request meets the USDA Policy that was initiated by a 12/11/2000 Executive Memorandum from President Clinton.

This policy requires WIC staff, at a minimum, to screen children's immunization status by counting the number of doses of DTaP vaccine received in relation to the child's current age. If the

child is underimmunized, WIC will provide information on the recommended schedule and refer them for immunization services. If an immunization record is not provided, in addition to the above steps, the parent/caretaker will be encouraged to bring the Immunization record to the next certification visit.

Training materials are being provided to WIC staff, however WIC staff may still have questions for local immunization staff. There may also be increased requests to providers for immunization records.

Assessment News

Tribal Connections

In 2002, the Immunization Program began working with the American Indian Health Commission for Washington State to build relationships and begin a project to assist Washington Tribes in assessing immunization coverage rates among children and adults. Within the requirements of the project, the assessments must include some tribal members <19 years of age. Tribes, however, also may choose to expand the project to include other age groups and other health practices and interventions. The Immunization Program will be available for assistance.

The first project began in late 2002. The Immunization Program has been working with one Washington Tribe on a project to assess and enhance vaccination coverage of 5th through 12th

grade students in the middle and high schools attended by most of the Tribal children. Some of the Tribe's activities have included a school poster contest focusing on immunizations, an immunization coverage assessment of 5th through 12th grade students with individual reports to all parents or guardians, and a basketball tournament for all students who participated in the coverage assessment. The Tribe also decided to develop culturally appropriate immunization materials (that could also be used by other tribes) and are planning a Health Fair focusing on the importance of immunizations and an immunization clinic for all Tribal members.

The Immunization Program plans to continue providing funding for interested Washington Tribes to participate in projects that include assessment of immunization coverage of some of their members as well as activities to enhance vaccination coverage rates of native populations within the State.

Education News

Now available for ordering:

- The revised MMR VIS (Rev 1/03) both English & Spanish
- Spanish "Plain Talk"

Changes at the Materials Distribution Center

Immunization materials distribution has been combined with overall DOH material distribution. During the transition, some orders were delayed. However, distribution is now back on track, and orders are currently being filled in a timely fashion. The Immunization Program will continue to monitor materials distribution to ensure customer service remains high.

The new contact at the Distribution Center is Gary Soderberg, at 360-586-9046. Please continue to fax or email your orders as usual to: immunematerials@doh.wa.gov or fax to 360-664-2929. Please provide comments regarding customer service via email to: immunematerials@doh.wa.gov.

Availability of Materials

The Immunization Program continues to evaluate the most efficient and effective ways to use materials resources and provide immunization materials to support immunization education, awareness and promotional activities. Through this process alternative sources for some materials that are typically ordered in low volume have been identified. A link will be provided to those alternative resources from the DOH Immunization Program web site. The materials that

will be made available through alternative sources include:

- CDC or Immunization Action Coalition materials -- available from their respective web sites
- Some less commonly used materials -- available from the H.E.R.E. in WA website (a DOH sponsored site that provides access to camera ready and commercial printer-ready health education materials).

The low volume materials will continue to be made available through the distribution center while supplies last or July 2003. Immunization Coordinators will receive a letter in the near future listing which items will be available only from alternative sources in the future and be provided an

opportunity to order remaining supplies of these items. The most common, high volume materials: CIS, VIS (English, Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese), and Lifetime Records, etc., will continue to be distributed in hard copy from the Distribution Center.

News from the field

Margaret Austin, Snohomish Health District Immunization Nurse and long time champion for immunization causes in Washington State will be leaving the Health District at the end of April. Good Luck, Margaret.

Mason County Health Department carried out the following activities for National Infant Immunization Week:

- Proclamation submitted to the Shelton Journal
- PSA submitted to the Shelton Journal
- Mailing to VFC providers in Mason County
- Mailing to Day Care Centers and Preschools
- PSA on local cable news, and
- Sent "talking points" to KMAS (local radio station)

Great job Joy and your staff!

We have been asked if we could include in our newsletter "comings and goings" from the LHJs. If you know of people that are leaving or are new hires, please send them to me and I can include them in the next newsletter.

In addition, we are always looking for success stories or lessons learned to share with other LHJs. Please send your ideas to me and I am happy to include them in the newsletter.

Thank you for all your great work and assistance. Contact me at cindy.gleason@doh.wa.gov or 360-236-3569.

News Briefs

Paul Offit's Editorial Explains The Power Of The Anecdote In Influencing Parents' Immunization Decisions

"The Power of 'Box A'," an editorial by Paul A. Offit, MD, explains how a single anecdote about a possible vaccine reaction can overpower extensive scientific data, leading parents to question or even decline immunization for their children. To access a camera-ready (PDF) version of the article, go to: <http://www.immunize.org/safety/boxa.pdf>.

VAC TRACS - New Web-Based Vaccine Management Tool Under Development

In November of 2002, the DOH Immunization Program convened a workgroup composed of local health jurisdiction representatives from around the state to initiate the development of a web-based vaccine ordering and reporting system, Vaccine *AC*cess, *TR*acking, *RE*porting *AC*countability System (VAC TRACS). Work has continued over the last 5 months, and the system is anticipated to be ready for training and implementation mid to late July. VAC TRACS is a web-based system, which will automate existing paper processes for all aspects of vaccine management related to DOH supplied vaccines, including vaccine ordering, inventory management, and report submission. VAC TRACS includes features designed to support and enhance DOH Immunization Program and LHJ vaccine management quality improvement efforts.

VAC TRACS will provide the capacity for LHJs to automatically generate reports that capture individual provider performance regarding vaccine management, including: vaccine ordering and distribution, inventory monitoring, vaccine waste and returns, and vaccine administration. The system can create roll-up reports on vaccine distribution and management for the entire jurisdiction, and can be used to incorporate performance benchmarks. VAC TRACS will provide easily producible documentation for items frequently requested during audits of LHJs. This important tool will assist the Department of Health in readily producing accountability information for legislative inquiries, and meeting state and federal reporting requirements. More information regarding time frames and training on for the project will follow. Contact: Jan Hicks-Thomson at 360-236-3578 or Jan.Hicks-Thomson@doh.wa.gov for more information.



WA State Dept. of Health
Immunization Program
PO Box 47843
Olympia, WA 98504-7843



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At All Ages

Questions, call 360-236-3569
Cindy Gleason, Editor